



ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

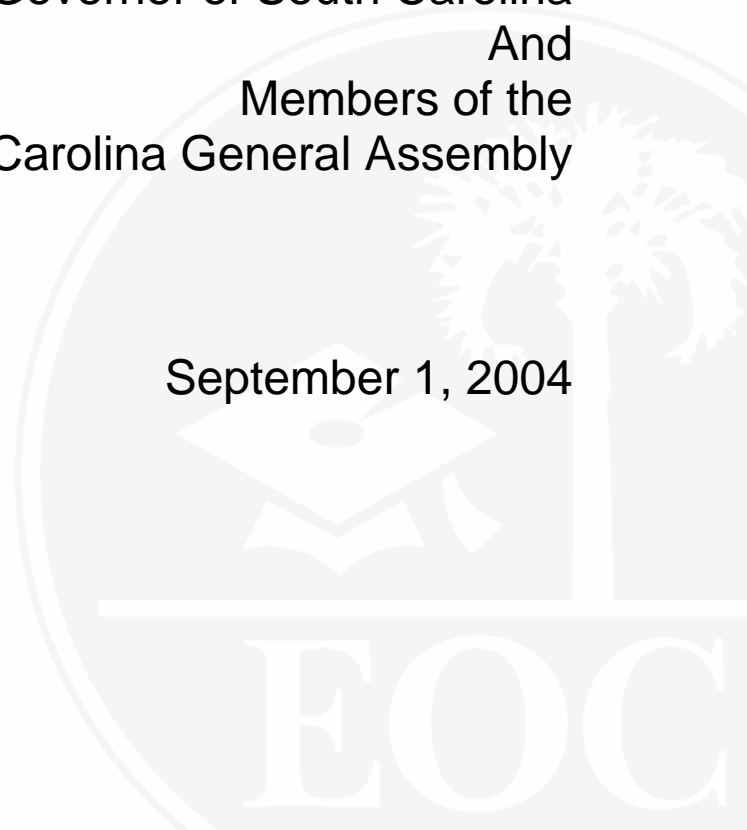
Fiscal Year 2003-2004

To
The Honorable Mark Sanford
Governor of South Carolina
And
Members of the
South Carolina General Assembly

September 1, 2004

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ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT TRANSMITTAL FORM

AGENCY NAME: **EDUCATION OVERSIGHT
COMMITTEE (EOC)**

DATE OF SUBMISSION: **September 1, 2004**

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SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mission and Values

The mission of the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) was adopted in July 1999. This mission affirms the statutory purpose and expectations for the agency:

Our mission is to effect the dramatic, results-based and continuous improvement of South Carolina's educational system by creating a truly collaborative environment of parents, educators, community leaders and policymakers.

The values underlying the mission are the following:

- A sole focus on what is best for students
- A belief in broad-based inclusion and collaboration
- A belief in standards, assessments, and publicly known results
- The implementation of research-and-fact-based solutions that improve results
- A passion for immediate, dramatic and continuous improvement that is unaffected by partisan politics

Major Achievements from the Past Year

This year has been a significant year in the implementation of South Carolina's accountability system. The system is represented within five major components: Standards, Assessments, Professional Development and Technical Assistance, Public Reporting and Rewards and Interventions. The South Carolina public education system was given the following grades by *Quality Counts 2004*, a publication of Editorial Projects in Education/ Education Week:

A	<i>Standards and Accountability</i>
A-	<i>Teacher Quality</i>
C+	<i>School Climate</i>
B-	<i>Adequacy of Funding</i>
C-	<i>Equity Funding</i>

In 2003 the South Carolina accountability system had been rated "B" (ranking fifth among the 50 states). In 2003 the Princeton Review rated the assessment component of the accountability system as eleventh among states in the nation.

The EOC contributed to the implementation of South Carolina's accountability system within each of the five components as reported below:

1. Standards: Through a cooperative project with the State Department of Education, content standards in the four major content areas were condensed into family-friendly documents and included referrals to additional resources. Beginning in 2002 and annually thereafter, Spanish-language versions of the standards have been made available to South Carolina school districts. Copies of both English and Spanish language family-friendly standards are provided to South Carolina school and district administrators in multiple formats for distribution to parents and families.

2. Assessments: The EOC reviewed the South Carolina Readiness Assessment, end-of-course assessments in English I, physical science and biology and the Alternate Form of the High School Assessment Program.

Lingering questions regarding the information yielded from the assessments, the timeliness of the receipt of that information and the costs of the testing program led to the EOC's advocacy for a legislative-supported task force on testing to be implemented in fall 2004 and winter 2005.

3. Professional Development and Technical Assistance: The EOC conducted its annual audit of retraining grants. The retraining grant program had expanded in the third year to nearly 300 South Carolina schools. The EOC published more specific criteria to assist local educators in using the funds and developed a rubric by which local educators could conduct summative evaluations of the program during the year of implementation.

For the second consecutive year, the EOC analyzed the results of the parent survey to determine parental perceptions of their child's school and to evaluate current state and local policies for increasing parental involvement in public schools. The analysis also was provided to the State Department of Education for its use in assisting schools in parental involvement programs and initiatives. The EOC also continues to develop tools for use by principals and School Improvement Councils in analyzing the results of the parent survey to identify areas of success and weakness over time. This year the EOC, in cooperation with the State Department of Education, included a letter to all principals answering questions about the design and importance of the parent survey.

The EOC formed a partnership with the Institute for Educational Leadership to establish an Education Policy Fellows Program (EPFP) in South Carolina. The EPFP is a joint effort of the EOC, the South Carolina State Department of Education, and Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence, Clemson University, the South Carolina Association of School Administrators and the South Carolina School Boards Association. The 2003 cadre of fellows included twenty-four individuals from the business, education and civic communities.

4. Public Reporting: The third annual school and district report cards were published in November 2003. The report card provides information about the quality of school results and the organizational context in which those results are achieved. The EOC instituted changes to incorporate the requirements of the federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation. The EOC continued to establish and, when appropriate, modify the criteria upon which schools are to be rated. Schools received two ratings: absolute performance and improvement rate.

Other responsibilities for reporting to the public include a number of analyses and program reports:

(a) Funding Model – In December 2003 the staff presented to the EOC a revised Education Finance Act (EFA) funding model. The model defined a base student cost and weighting system that would provide adequate revenues per pupil for all districts and schools to deploy research-based educational strategies that are successful in educating all students to high academic standards. The model which recommended a base student cost of \$5,250 was based on a teacher student ratio of 1:21 for all elementary, middle and high school classes. In addition, current EFA weightings were revised in order to provide additional services for students based upon student performance and needs, including poverty, limited English proficiency and career exploration.

(b) The Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act also required the EOC to recognize employers who have implemented workplace policies and programs that allow parents to become more involved in their child's education. For the third consecutive year, the EOC worked in collaboration with the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, the State Department of Education, and First Steps, the United Way of the Midlands, and other agencies and private entities to administer the 2004 Family Friendly Workplace Awards Program.

(c) Evaluation of Parenting/Family Literacy Programs – The EOC reviewed the Parenting/Family Literacy programs funded through the EIA. The study was completed in the fall of 2003. The evaluation documented the funding, expenditure and operations of the program since its inception and assessed the effectiveness of the program based upon statutory requirements and the education objectives of the state. The key finding of the report was a need to focus funding on local programs that provide comprehensive family literacy programs that address the intergenerational cycles of poverty through adult education, early childhood education and parenting programs. The study also recommended that local school district boards of trustees and superintendents focus their parent education and family literacy activities on teen parents and first-time parents in order to address long term, cyclical patterns of poverty in their communities.

(d) Review of Use of Flexibility Proviso – The EOC reviewed the utilization of the flexibility proviso by school districts. According to provisos in the annual general appropriation act, school districts may transfer up to one hundred percent of funds from any one program to another as long as the funds are used for direct classroom support. Lottery funds are excluded as well as funds used for teacher salaries. The EOC analyzed the transfers to determine which programs funds were transferred from and into as well as the rationales for the transfers. Equally important, the EOC determined which school districts requested no transfers of funds

(e) In July 2001 the EOC approved a long-range plan as a working document to guide the state's achievement of the 2010 goal. The results of third year actions are available from the EOC.

(f) Under the requirements of the Teacher Quality Act of 2000, the EOC conducted its third annual review of the Teacher Loan Program. The 2003 evaluation examined not only the utility of the program but the interaction of the loan program with other scholarship and loan programs available to future educators.

(g) The EOC conducted a study of efforts to close the achievement gap between white and African American students and between students who pay for lunch and who participate in the free/reduced price lunch program. The data also indicated that what the adults in schools and in communities do makes a difference, and that schools can be successful in raising the achievement levels of all students to a high level regardless of the risk factors students bring to school with them.

5. Rewards and Interventions: No changes were made to the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards program. The EOC is working with the State Department of Education to develop criteria for alternative technical assistance programs.

Key Strategic Goals for Present and Future Years

The Education Oversight Committee has adopted the goal boxed below to guide its work:

By 2010, South Carolina's student achievement will be ranked in the top half of states nationally. To achieve this goal, we must become one of the five fastest improving systems in the country.

To achieve this goal, the EOC established the following objectives for its operations in 2003-04:

1. Continue to implement the provisions and fulfill the responsibilities of the Education Accountability Act of 1998.
 - Increase actions to promote public and community involvement in the promotion of strong public schools;
 - Strengthen relationships with elected officials at all levels of government to ensure that the education of young people is a first priority in communities and the state.
2. Define sufficient funding for schools and develop models for shared responsibility between state and local governments.
 - Define adequate funding needed to achieve the 2010 goal with models incorporating recognition of student poverty, measures to ensure teacher quality, best practices and reliable and valid research and eliminating process or program requirements that do not contribute to the achievement of the 2010 goal;
 - Review all existing revenues sources and discuss the related responsibilities of state and local governing bodies.
3. Advocate legislation and align budget recommendations to implement systems and structures to ensure that South Carolina schools have the capacity to reach the state's 2010 goal and the goal of *No Child Left Behind*.
 - Review accountability reports for professional development programs to determine the most effective use of resources;
 - Explore salary structures, incentives and working environments to promote employment packages that ensure highly qualified administrators and teachers in the pre-kindergarten through grade twelve programs and schools;
 - Identify teaching and learning practices and policies that eliminate the achievement gaps by advancing the achievement of all students to a high level;
 - Recommend changes to the statute to ensure that technical assistance programs incorporate strategies to develop local capacity and responsibility;
 - Propose changes to the state assessment systems to provide more information to teachers and parents and to contain costs.
4. Provide the resources and professional development so that data based decision-making is implemented at all levels of the educational system.
 - Advocate for a unique student identifier and teacher/faculty identifier for students and personnel in the state's public schools and public institutions of postsecondary education;
 - Establish an interactive data warehouse to improve the quality of data, the ease of collection and access to information for decision-making.

To continue its work in 2004-2005, the EOC adopted the following objectives:

1. Continue to implement the provisions and fulfill the responsibilities of the Education Accountability Act of 1998
 - Advocate for quality teaching and learning experiences so that every student can achieve at high levels
 - Support the continuing professional development of school boards and their members and the development of strong school district governance structures
 - Extend parental and community involvement efforts to support of young people as they progress through school, particularly at transitions between school levels
 - Increase the utilization of data published on the annual school and district report card and from other sources in decision-making for students, schools and the state
 - Prepare educators and communities to work with the system of increasing rigor
2. Develop measures, promote policies and implement practices so that each student is able to earn a state high school diploma
 - Heighten public awareness of the importance of a high school diploma and its relationship to individual and state success
 - Determine the currency of high school graduation requirements, including the requirements (or lack of requirements) for specific courses and the attendance requirements
 - Explore tactical approaches to increasing the high school graduation rate such as matrix testing to demonstrate competencies, high school to college dual enrollment, career exploration, and creative articulation agreements
 - Explore the usefulness of choice programs for career/technology and college preparatory high school programs
 - Identify programs that help students develop the personal values and efficacy needed for high school graduation
 - Explore the identification and education of students with disabilities and how these systems may impact on a student's opportunity to earn a state high school diploma
3. Strengthen the teaching of reading
 - Identify ways in which the teaching of reading can be given greater priority in kindergarten through grade twelve teacher development
 - Ensure that administrators have sufficient knowledge and understanding to support strong instruction in reading
 - Determine how current professional development funding can be realigned to address teacher skills and knowledge to teach reading across the grades and through the content areas
4. Review and revise long-range plans to address strategic issues before South Carolina
 - Develop a comprehensive performance profile of students in the middle grades to identify areas for action to promote higher achievement
 - Ensure that teachers and administrators in the middle grades have adequate professional development

- Modify leadership training to includes teams of administrators and teachers working toward common goals
- Review Title 59 to determine statutes that are inconsistent with a results-based orientation
- Update the funding model
- Develop connections with higher education in support of a seamless system
- Assign priority among actions in the long-range plan through a weighting system

Opportunities and Barriers that may affect the Agency's Success in Fulfilling its Mission and Achieving its Strategic Goals

The most persistent barrier to the EOC fulfilling its mission is the receipt of high quality and timely data. Because the South Carolina education system does not employ a data warehouse strategy with systematic and timely updates and multiple-levels of access, the EOC must wait until data have been processed by other agencies. Upon recommendation of the EOC, the General Assembly funded a unique student identifier program that should facilitate linkages of student data over time. A data warehouse has been proposed; the warehouse would include student information, academic performance, professional staff information and school funding (revenues and expenditures).

The second persistent barrier is data quality. The EOC identified a series of individuals to work as a data quality team to examine the local processes and procedures that determine the accuracy, validity and reliability of data in schools and districts. The data quality team selected a study of high school transcripts to determine the accuracy of graduation data as its first task. The EOC worked through six school districts during the summer of 2004 to collect the data. Analyses are scheduled for fall 2004 and winter 2005.

How the Accountability Report is used to Improve Organizational Performance

In 2004, the EOC determined that the ways in which the agency functioned should be the central focus of this accountability report rather than a report on how the accountability program functions. During the early spring 2004 the EOC conducted an assessment of employee perceptions of the agency and satisfaction. These data were used to outline a plan of action to include implementation of a Baldrige study cycle, realignment of the responsibilities of several agency employees, and a team effort in developing the accountability report. Staff from the agency is working with a Baldrige examiner and the agency director is to attend a Baldrige meeting in fall 2004.

SECTION II: BUSINESS OVERVIEW

1. Employees

Eight full-time staff persons support the EOC's work. Two part-time temporary employees and a graduate assistant provide additional support. The EOC is authorized to have ten full-time employees; however, recent budget reductions preclude full staffing.

2. Operational Locations

The EOC offices are located in Suite 227 Blatt Building in Columbia on the State House grounds. The Columbia location serves the EOC well, providing access to other state government agencies and key professional associations and affording a central base from which staff or members can travel statewide.

3. Expenditure/Appropriations Chart

Base Appropriations

The Education Oversight Committee is funded with EIA revenues and does not receive any General Funds. Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations are detailed in the table below:

Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations

	02-03 Actual Expenditures		03-04 Actual Expenditures		04-05 Appropriations	
Major Budget Categories			Total Funds	EIA Funds	Total Funds	EIA Funds
Personal Service	\$521,627.16	\$521,627.16	\$519,869.00	\$519,869.00	\$633,377.00	\$633,377.00
Other Operating	\$357,894.88	\$357,894.88	\$331,781.00	\$331,781.00	\$437,322.00	\$437,322.00
Public Awareness	\$237,366.00	\$237,366.00	\$226,592.00	\$226,592.00	\$226,592.00	\$226,592.00
Family Involvement	\$47,473.00	\$47,473.00	\$45,318.00	\$45,318.00	\$45,318.00	\$45,318.00
Middle Grades	\$94,550.54	\$94,550.54	\$95,470.00	\$95,470.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00
Fringe Benefits	\$126,798.67	\$126,798.67	\$128,503.00	\$128,503.00	\$143,839.00	\$143,839.00
Total	\$1,385,710.25	\$1,385,710.25	\$1,347,533.00	\$1,347,533.00	\$1,586,448.00	\$1,586,448.00

Other Funds

The EOC has decision-making authority for expenditures of funds secured by the EOC's business leadership for the Public Awareness Fund. That fund has a balance of \$73,564.92. The Carnegie Fund has a zero balance and the Other Operating Fund has a \$4,287.05 balance.

Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	02-03 Actual Expenditures	03-04 Actual Expenditures
Public Awareness Fund	\$125,297.35	\$44,048.55
Carnegie Grant Fund	0.00	0.00
Other Operating Fund	0.00	0.00

Interim Budget Reductions

2003-2004 Interim Budget Reduction

\$48,236.00 (EOC)
 \$4,530.00 (Middle Grades)
 \$2,155.00 (Family Involvement)
\$10,774.00 (Public Awareness)
 \$65,695.00 TOTAL

4. Major Program Areas Chart

Program Number and Title	Major Program Area Purpose	FY02-03 Budget Expenditures	FY03-04 Budget Expenditures	Key Cross References for Financial Results
Agency Administration: overhead	This function supports personnel, financial and administrative function of the agency in accordance with duties outlined in the Education Accountability Act of 1998, the Teacher Quality Act of 2000, the Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act of 2000 and other duties outlined in the annual General Appropriations Act. Costs reflected include supervision, communications, data processing, general administration and similar costs.	State: Federal: Other: \$245,242 Total: 17% of budget	State: Federal: Other: \$287,222 Total: 20% of budget	Compliance to state statutes and regulations; clean audit by appropriate agencies
Implementation and oversight of the educational accountability system	This function fulfills the requirements of 59-6-10 (1) and (4) and 59-6-110 (1) and (2) to ensure that the Education Accountability Act of 1998 is implemented in a manner consistent with its intent and in the time frame defined in the statute.	State: Federal: Other: \$647,760 Total: 43% of budget	State: Federal: Other: \$656,393 Total: 45% of budget	Completion of tasks outlined in the statute; changes in student and school performance; achievement of the 2010 goal
Evaluation of the functioning of public education	This function fulfills the requirements of 59-6-10 (2) and (3) and 59-6-110 (3) and (4) and appropriate sections in the Teacher Quality Act of 2000 to ensure that there is a continuous evaluation of South Carolina's education policies, programs and funding so that student achievement continues to improve	State: Federal: Other: \$177,024 Total: 12% of budget	State: Federal: Other: \$235,256 Total: 16% of budget	Completion of tasks outlined in the statute; changes in student and school performance; achievement of the 2010 goal
Family Involvement	This function fulfills the support and evaluation requirements outlined in the Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act 59-29-190	State: Federal: Other: \$25,052 Total: 2% of budget	State: Federal: Other: \$45,318 Total: 3% of budget	Improved relationships between parents and schools (immediate data factors are reported on the annual school report card)

Program Number and Title	Major Program Area Purpose	FY02-03 Budget Expenditures	FY03-04 Budget Expenditures	Key Cross References for Financial Results
Public Awareness	This function fulfills the responsibilities outlined in 59-18-1700 through the public awareness program and operates the Education Policy Fellows Program. The public awareness program receives funding through an appropriation within the SDE. The <u>authorized</u> funds represented on this line are either revenue funds from the Education Policy Fellows Program or outside fund raising. NOTE: These funds are authorized, not appropriated nor necessarily actual.	State: Federal: Other: \$305,481 Total: 20% of budget	State: Federal: Other: \$137,051 Total: 9% of budget	Engagement of broader community in support for student and school improvement
Proviso-directed actions	The Education Oversight Committee serves as the fiscal agent for Middle Grades Project funds as provided in Proviso 1A.22 and for funds provided to the South Carolina Council on Economic Education in accordance with Proviso 1A.41	State: Federal: Other: \$93,867 Total: 6% of budget	State: Federal: Other: \$95,470 Total: 7% of budget	Administrative processing of funds in accordance with state statutes and regulations

NOTE: Budget figures in the table above are based upon reorganization of the expenditures in accordance with the activities defined in Summer 2004 and shown above.

5. Key Customer Segments Linked to Key Products/Services

Governor and 170 Members of the General Assembly - The EOC provides recommendations regarding programs, policies and funding based upon the level of achievement for students and schools as well as program evaluations. The EOC serves as a data source for elected officials, maintains the visibility of education among the state priorities and provides publications including *Learning Matters*, *Voices*, annual recommendations and topical reports.

Educators-The EOC provides educators with results of research studies on the achievement gap, longitudinal matched student performance data, analyses of ratings and factors related to the ratings as well as technical support for use of the ratings and report cards. The technical documents include the annual *Accountability Manual*, the *Communications Tool Kit*, and detailed reports on the data. Educators are provided *TIPS* booklets for use with parents, businesses and community organizations.

Parents-The EOC works with parents in workshops sponsored by the EOC or other organizations. These workshops address the 2010 goal, the school and district ratings and related information, and ways in which parents can be engaged with their child and with schools. Publications for parents include a guide to using the report card, the family-friendly versions of the content standards and the *TIPS* publications. These are available in both English and Spanish.

Public at Large-The EOC works with the public at large through a series of informational and leadership meetings, including training on how to use the annual school and district report cards. The EOC works with the media to ensure that data are interpreted accurately and widespread communication is maintained with the public. Publications targeting the general public include *Voices*, *Learning Matters* and *TIPS*.

6. Key Stakeholders (Other than Customers)

Business Community-EOC members and staff participate in a number of business-focused groups including the Council for Excellence in Education and the Council on Competitiveness. EOC publications are made available to businesses for use with their employees.

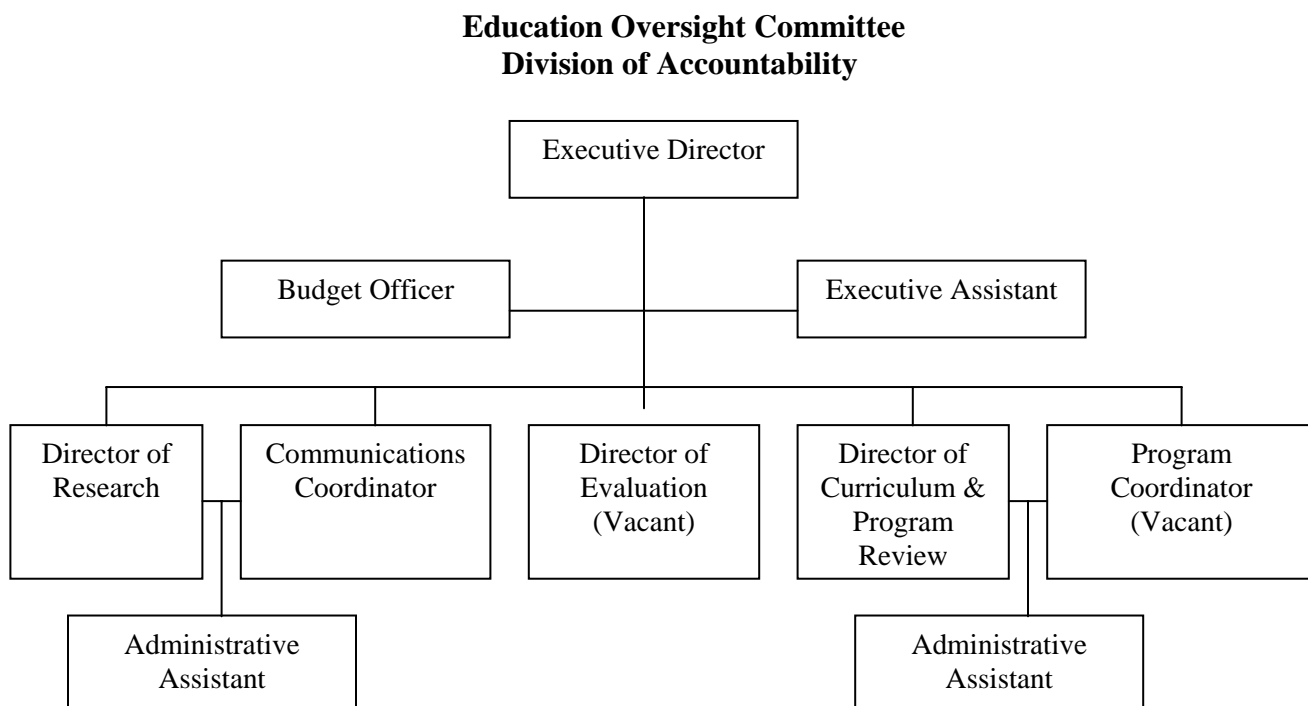
Students-The EOC has conducted report card workshops with groups of students although this is not a frequent activity. Generally, the EOC commits to students that its energies are focused on an educational system that leads them to a successful future.

7. Key Suppliers

The EOC explores issues and concerns for its customers through analyses of data from South Carolina's public education system, primarily the South Carolina State Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education, the Student Loan Corporation and school districts. The EOC utilizes the financial, professional, programmatic and academic testing programs for data sources. The EOC also conducts focus groups, surveys, and other data collections as required by the particular program or service under study. Through work with the Budget and Control Board's Division of Research and Statistics, the EOC has been able to explore aspects of student lives and performance from multiple perspectives.

8. Organizational Structure

In 2003-2004 the EOC was organized as shown in the figure below:



SECTION III: ELEMENTS OF THE MALCOLM BALDRIGE AWARD CRITERIA

1. LEADERSHIP

The EOC is composed of eighteen (18) members. Seventeen are appointed by the Governor or by legislative leaders. The State Superintendent serves as an ex-officio member. The membership is shown in the chart below, with appointing official and term of office detailed.

2003-2004 Membership

MEMBER	REPRESENTATION	APPOINTMENT OF	APPOINT DATE	TERM
Robert Staton <i>Chairman</i>	Business	Chairman, Senate Education Committee	1998 reappointed in 2002	2002-2006
Alex Martin <i>Vice Chairman</i>	Business	Speaker of the House	2001	2001-2005
Traci Young Cooper	Education	Chairman, Senate Education Committee	2002	2002-2006
Robert Daniel	Business	Chairman, House Education and Public Works Committee	2000	2004-2008
Dennis Drew	Education	Governor	2003	2003-2006
Mike Fair	Designee	President Pro Tempore, Senate	2001	Coterminous
Warren Giese	Chairman, Senate Education Committee		2001	Coterminous
Wallace Hall, Jr.*	Education	Chairman, House Education and Public Works	2002	2002-2006
Robert Harrell, Jr.	Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee		1998	Coterminous
Susan Hoag	Designee	Speaker of the House	1998	1998-2004
Hugh Leatherman, Sr.	Chairman, Senate Finance Committee		2002	Coterminous
Harry Lightsey, III	Business	President Pro Tempore, Senate	2002	2002-2006
Susan Marlowe	Education	President Pro Tempore, Senate	2001	2001-2005
George Martin*	Education	Chairman, House Education and Public Works	2003	2003-2004
Joseph Neal	Designee	Speaker of the House	2004	Coterminous
Harold Stowe	Business	Governor	2002	2002-2006
Inez Tenenbaum	State Superintendent of Education		2000	Coterminous
Robert Walker	Designee	Chairman, House Education and Public Works	2002	Coterminous
Judy H. Williams	Designee	Governor	Appointed in 2003	coterminous
Larry Wilson	Business	Governor	1998 reappointed in 2002	2002-2006

*George Martin served an interim appointment of one year while Wallace Hall was on active military duty.

1. How do senior leaders set, deploy and ensure two-way communication for: a) short and long-term direction b) performance expectations, c) organizational values, d) empowerment and innovation, e) organizational and employee learning, and f) ethical behavior?

(a) An Executive Director directs the EOC operations. The Executive Director works with EOC members in an annual objective setting process to outline the critical areas for the year. For each of the EOC's six years of operation, annual objectives have been established to guide actions relative to its statutory responsibilities and achievement of the 2010 goal.

The 2010 goal (*By 2010, South Carolina's student achievement will be ranked in the top half of states nationally. To achieve this goal, we must become one of the five fastest improving systems in the country.*) has shaped the work plan and the focus of the staff. After the establishment of annual objectives, the Executive Director develops a management plan to provide time lines, identify data requirements, allocate resources, and establish the criteria for satisfactory accomplishment. The Executive Director meets twice monthly with all staff persons and, in additional meetings, with senior staff persons. The small number of employees permits almost daily interaction among staff on projects.

(b) Performance expectations are established each August in individual meetings with each employee. Historically the EOC has used the EPMS system established by the South Carolina Office of Human Resources. In 2004 the agency is switching to a combination of the EPMS system and a Baldrige-compatible document linked closely to the organizational objectives.

(c) The EOC and its staff commit to the values stated below:

- A sole focus on what is best for students
- A belief in broad-based inclusion and collaboration
- A belief in standards, assessments, and publicly known results
- The implementation of research-and fact-based solutions that improve results
- A passion for immediate, dramatic and continuous improvement that is unaffected by partisan politics

Incorporating these values into the work of the EOC is an on-going effort. The work of the EOC, especially evidenced in the criteria to rate schools and districts, includes distinct measures to value all students. The ratings formulas require inclusion of the performance of all student groups, offer incentives for improvements in the performance of historically under-performing students, focus heavily on improvement measured longitudinally, and recognize increasing levels of student knowledge and skill.

The EOC is responsible for recommendations on a number of EAA programs and services. As the staff members work through proposals, advisory groups are formed from among the education profession, parents and community leaders. These collaborations broaden understanding of the complex issues and contribute to the quality of recommendations. The work of the EOC is open to the public. Through its website, print publications and presentations, the EOC provides descriptive and technical documentation for each of its decisions. At each of the EOC meetings, time is reserved on the meeting agenda for "Reports from a Key Constituency." These reports provide civic, business and education leaders an opportunity to comment on issues relevant to the work of the EOC and/or to describe programs and services contributing to higher levels of performance.

To build greater understanding through data and evidence, the EOC works with the Division of Research and Statistics at the Budget and Control Board, the State Department of Education, the University of South Carolina, Clemson University, the Commission on Higher Education and other agencies. The partnerships enable the EOC to examine health and social circumstances impacting upon school performance as well as student, school and district performance.

(d) The EOC staff is organized around primary responsibilities. Each staff member is expected to be an advocate for agency functions by exploring ways in which the materials and actions can be stronger. Staff members are expected to complete necessary training so that they can perform at higher levels. Late in the fiscal year 2004, the EOC restructured several staff positions to provide improved services and opportunities for agency work to be exemplary. Staff members in the restructured positions are participating in extensive professional development to enable them to succeed in these positions.

(e) Both the organization and employees have matured over the last several years. As a new agency the EOC encountered initial difficulties in working through others to accomplish its responsibilities. Over the years the EOC has developed practices including required advisory groups, explicit criteria, use of simulations to generate wider acceptance for its work. Employees are encouraged and supported financially as they acquire new knowledge and skills so that the agency performs at a higher level.

(f) The EOC ascribes to the professional standards on testing and assessment of the American Education Research Association and the standards on program evaluation of the Joint Committee on Standards for Education Evaluation. The EOC draws upon work on curriculum and assessment issues by the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the National Science Teacher Association, South Carolina Science Council and the National Council for the Social Studies. Colleagues representing the American Federation of Teachers, the Council on Basic Education and the Fordham Foundation and other professional organizations support reviews of South Carolina standards and assessments.

Finally, with great deliberation, the EOC acts in a bi-partisan manner, endorsing principles and practices that contribute to higher levels of student performance. In accordance with its statutory direction, the EOC provides recommendations on policies, programs and funding to ensure that the state's achievement continues to rise. The EOC refrains from endorsing particular bills before the General Assembly or candidates for office, although the EOC may identify elements of programs and issues that should be addressed in the legislative process.

2. How do senior leaders establish and promote a focus on customers and other stakeholders?

The focus on customers is established through agreements that the staff shall respond to communication promptly. These include commitments to respond in the following manner:

- Respond to all requests for available information, including presentations for school districts, before community groups, and for professional organizations.
- Provide access to technical documentation for each proposal and/or decision; and
- Respond to e-mail and telephone calls within twenty-four hours.

While a response may require analyses or information not immediately available, staff members are expected to reply to customers as soon as possible. The staff members also work with legislators and other customers to provide them with information and recommendations in the timeframe for legislative decision-making. In the last year, the staff has published technical and evaluation studies using multiple formats: print, electronic and public presentation. The Executive Director maintained a listing of school districts to ensure that staff drew upon district expertise and the processes were available to all South Carolina school districts. Customer focus is extended through presentations and participation in multiple association meetings and in informal meetings with leaders in the education and legislative communities. The Executive Director travels statewide to meet with district superintendents to learn of their concerns and to understand the issues as they impact school districts differently. Each EOC professional staff member is assigned to serve as liaison to a professional community.

The EOC employs advisory groups for every technical aspect of the accountability program. The utilization of advisory groups improves proposals and understandings by consideration of multiple perspectives.

3. How do senior leaders maintain fiscal, legal and regulatory accountability?

The EOC fiscal actions are processed through the Offices of the State Treasurer, the Comptroller General and Auditor; therefore, actions are reviewed within the state system. Full and comprehensive documentation is provided for each fiscal action to ensure that the procurement processes have been honored and the payment of funds is administered in accordance with state-defined procedures.

The EOC conforms to all statutes and regulations regarding expenditures, employees, insurance, liability, etc. These actions are reviewed on an annual basis by the appropriate governmental entities for compliance.

The EOC incorporates statutory and regulatory references in its work to ensure that the legal requirements are met fully.

4. What key performance measures are regularly reviewed by your senior leaders?

The accuracy, reliability and validity of data are reviewed on a continuous basis beginning with initial data receipt and continuing through publication of data. The utilization of advisory groups in the development of requirements or determination of program evaluations is a second key performance measure. The accuracy, appeal and timeliness of publications is a third performance measure, particularly with respect to providing materials on a schedule that they can be used by schools, districts and state agencies and that legislative recommendations are received on a schedule for full consideration.

5. How do senior leaders use organizational performance review findings and employee feedback to improve their own leadership effectiveness and the effectiveness of management throughout the organization?

Performance expectations for individual staff members are set at the beginning of each employment year. Using the Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) as the basis for evaluation, the Executive Director and individual staff persons appraise the previous year's performance, identify

areas for professional growth in the succeeding year, and outline assistance needed to achieve those goals. Annually, the Executive Director conducts evaluations with each staff member.

Each year the EOC Chairman meets with the EOC to evaluate the Executive Director. The Chairman and the Executive Director then discuss the performance appraisal, progress in the EOC's work, accomplishment of the annual objectives and the use of EOC resources to contribute to the achievement of the 2010 goal. Areas for increased attention are identified and addressed.

Each staff member is asked to identify an area for professional growth annually and to participate in the professional organizations that support that growth. EOC staff persons hold memberships in the American Educational Research Association, the American Evaluation Association, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the American Association of School Administrators and its South Carolina affiliate, the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) and its South Carolina affiliate, the National Council on Social Studies and its South Carolina affiliate, the South Carolina Educators for the Practical Use of Research, and others. Dr. Jo Anne Anderson, Executive Director, serves on the College of Charleston School of Education Advisory Board, the Arts in the Basic Curriculum Board, and the Communities in Schools Advisory Board. This year, Mrs. Deborah Elmore was active as a past-President of the South Carolina Chapter of the NSPRA; Mr. David Potter was active as a past President of the South Carolina Educators for the Practical Use of Research and served on the First Steps Evaluation Committee; and Dr. Paul Horne served on the Board of the Foundation for the Advancement of Social Studies Education and on the Steering Committee for the National Council for Social Studies. Staff members also participate in conferences sponsored by the Southern Regional Education Board and the Education Commission of the States.

6. How does the organization address the current and potential impact on the public of its products, programs, services, facilities and operations, included associated risks?

The EOC has been concerned with the impact of the accountability system since its inception. Rating schools and providing continuing evaluation has the potential for inciting negative reactions to the public education system. At each point in system design and implementation the EOC has engaged broad constituencies in the discussion. A comprehensive public awareness campaign is a major component of the EOC's work. The EOC members and staff worked with community and educational leaders in each of the forty-six counties in winter and spring 2001 and completed another series of county meetings in spring 2004. The EOC members and staff annually conduct workshops or presentations with business leaders, educators and media representatives throughout the state to prepare them for the publication of the report card and suggest strategies for using the report card information to strengthen the public education system and support educators in their work.

The Executive Director communicates organizational priorities through formal and informal meetings with other groups and individuals. Formal presentations are made at meetings and conferences as well as written materials provided to individuals. These groups range from the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce to the Legislative Black Caucus. Informal meetings include monthly luncheons with leaders in the South Carolina School Boards Association, frequent informal meetings with leaders of professional associations, and monthly meetings with the Instructional Roundtable.

The EOC conducts simulations to determine the impact of any change in the rating system and to identify anomalies in the data that should be addressed in technical considerations. These simulations are particularly helpful in ensuring that changes in school indices and/or ratings are artifacts of change in instruction and performance, not a statistical manipulation.

7. How does senior leadership set and communicate key organizational priorities for improvement?

Organizational priorities are set during the July two-day meeting of the EOC. At that meeting the EOC reviews the work of the previous year and establishes priorities for the ensuing year. Within the agency, the EOC objectives are incorporated into the management plan for the ensuing year, discussed with customers and stakeholders and a descriptive materials distributed to general audiences. The actions then are taken by the staff and developed into action plans that are assigned and built into individual evaluations.

8. How does senior leadership actively support and strengthen the community?

The EOC and the Executive Director support the community through participation in a number of professional and agency activities. These include purchase of the Apple license tags, and service on the Communities-in-Schools advisory groups. The staff also participated in ETV fundraising initiatives. Staff members served as judges in the South Carolina Bar Association's Annual "We the People" competition for high schools. EOC staff participated in the South Carolina School Boards Association Strategic Planning effort, the selection of "Red Carpet Schools", the Education Policy Fellows Program Advisory Board, the College of Charleston Advisory Board and Red Cross blood drives. EOC members and staff served on the Family Friendly Workplace Awards committee and a staff person moderated the South Carolina Geography Bee. Two staff members served on School Improvement Councils.

2. STRATEGIC PLANNING

1. What is your Strategic Planning process, including KEY participants, and how does it account for (a) customer needs and expectations, (b) financial, societal and other potential risks; (c) human resources capabilities and needs; (d) operational capabilities and needs; (e) supplier/contractor/partner capabilities and needs?

Each year the EOC members meet for a two-day retreat to review the progress of the past year, conduct an environmental scan to determine opportunities and barriers, and determine priorities for the ensuing year. The participants include all EOC members and staff as well as key consultants.

For purposes of the long-range plan the EOC organized a long-range planning group to advise the EOC on the core issues to be addressed and the strategies to address those issues in order that the state might achieve the 2010 goal. Twenty-two persons representing the EOC, the Office of the Governor, the State Superintendent of Education, the State Board of Education, the Governor's Math-Science Advisory Board, the South Carolina Center for Teacher Recruitment, local school boards, superintendents, principals, teachers, and community leaders met during 1999-2000.

The planning group conducted an environmental scan, examined materials detailing the Governor's vision for South Carolina, the SDE Baldrige project, data on student performance, school and district structure, funding and other materials descriptive of South Carolina public school students and the schools that serve them. Because of the EOC's function as a legislative agency with advisory

responsibilities to other agencies of government, the plan encompasses the needs of the educational system, not only the EOC.

Nine areas for public action were identified, as follows:

- The Governance and Structure of the System
- Sufficient Funding for All School Districts and Schools
- Efficient Use of Resources and Accountability
- Education for Economic Development
- Leadership and Coalition Building
- Teacher Quality
- Early Childhood Education and Development
- Community and Parental Support and Involvement
- Safe and Healthy Schools

(a) With respect to customer needs and expectations, the EOC works with customers to determine the kinds of information and awareness projects needed to ensure that the schools and districts are receiving the technical support (data, reports of analyses, community awareness activities) they need to build performance.

(b) Financial, societal and other potential risks are examined by staff and advisory groups to monitor changes and intended, as well as unintended, consequences.

(c) Human resource capabilities and needs are explored in a series of staff meetings as a group and in individual conferences with staff. Because the agency is small and expected to be agile in moving from one priority to another, the EOC must be cautious that staff are not over-extended and that the amount of work impacts negatively on the quality of work.

(d) Operational capabilities remain a concern, especially as agency funding declined with mid-year budget reductions. Funding has been restored for Fiscal Year 2005 and staff members have been provided a cost-of-living raise. The EOC has been diligent in ensuring that the computing technology used by the agency is current and has the capacity to support agency work.

(e) Supplier/contractor/partner capabilities and needs have not been a problem. The EOC works with a public relations firm on a number of projects as well as meeting with the principals on a monthly basis to ensure that the work of the agency is progressing. The EOC works with a number of printers and stays in close contact with them as projects move through the process.

2. What are your key strategic objectives (reference is to 2003-2004)?

- Continue to implement the provisions and fulfill the responsibilities of the Education Accountability Act of 1998.
- Define sufficient funding for schools and develop models for shared responsibility between state and local governments.
- Advocate legislation and align budget recommendations to implement systems and structures to ensure that South Carolina schools have the capacity to reach the state's 2010 goal and the goal of *No Child Left Behind*.

- Provide the resources and professional development so that data based decision-making is implemented at all levels of the educational system.

3. How do you develop and track action plans that address your key strategic objectives?

(a) Implementation of the EAA: The Education Oversight Committee has direct responsibilities for implementation of the Education Accountability Act (EAA). To ensure that those responsibilities are met, the agency developed a time line that corresponds to the statutory requirements of the legislation. Some EAA tasks are assigned to the State Board and/or State Department of Education and are noted accordingly. Tasks that have been completed and tasks to be completed are separated.

The time line permits tracking of the EAA implementation. Internally, the staff members use the Executive Director's annual management plan to ensure that work is accomplished in accordance with the time lines of the legislation and the requirements of the EOC.

These materials are available on the EOC website and are distributed among interested educators and policy-makers.

(b) Within each of the nine areas of the long-range plan, key measurable results were specified, including actions and agencies responsible for those actions. Preliminary funding requirements were projected at the time of adoption.

(c) Actions also are traced through the management plan used in the agency and through EOC agendas, actions and minutes.

4. What are your key action plans/initiatives?

- Continue to implement the provisions and fulfill the responsibilities of the Education Accountability Act of 1998.
- Increase actions to promote public and community involvement in the promotion of strong public schools;
- Strengthen relationships with elected officials at all levels of government to ensure that the education of young people is a first priority in communities and the state.
- Define sufficient funding for schools and develop models for shared responsibility between state and local governments.
- Define adequate funding needed to achieve the 2010 goal with models incorporating recognition of student poverty, measures to ensure teacher quality, best practices and reliable and valid research and eliminating process or program requirements that do not contribute to the achievement of the 2010 goal;
- Review all existing revenues sources and discuss the related responsibilities of state and local governing bodies.
- Advocate legislation and align budget recommendations to implement systems and structures to ensure that South Carolina schools have the capacity to reach the state's 2010 goal and the goal of *No Child Left Behind*.
- Review accountability reports for professional development programs to determine the most effective use of resources;
- Explore salary structures, incentives and working environments to promote employment packages that ensure highly qualified administrators and teachers in the pre-kindergarten through grade twelve programs and schools;

- Identify teaching and learning practices and policies that eliminate the achievement gaps by advancing the achievement of all students to a high level;
- Recommend changes to the statute to ensure that technical assistance programs incorporate strategies to develop local capacity and responsibility;
- Propose changes to the state assessment systems to provide more information to teachers and parents and to contain costs.
- Provide the resources and professional development so that data based decision-making is implemented at all levels of the educational system.
- Advocate for a unique student identifier and teacher/faculty identifier for students and personnel in the state's public schools and public institutions of postsecondary education;
- Establish an interactive data warehouse to improve the quality of data, the ease of collection and access to information for decision-making.

5. How do you communicate and deploy your strategic objectives, action plans and performance measures?

The strategic objectives, actions plans and performance measures are distributed in print and web-based publications. Materials are distributed through the education associations, school districts, South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, and related advocacy organizations. Presentations are made to community and professional audiences. Special sessions are held with legislators and both within-and end-of-session materials are provided.

6. If the agency's strategic plan is available to the public through the agency's internet homepage, please provide an address for that plan on the website.

The long range plan for the improvement of South Carolina's public education system is posted on the EOC web site, www.sceoc.org

Strategic Planning

Program Number and Title	Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Related FY 03-04 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiative (s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures
Implementation and Oversight of the EAA	Continue to implement the provisions and fulfill the responsibilities of the Education Accountability Act of 1998.	Increase actions to promote public and community involvement in the promotion of strong public schools; Strengthen relationships with elected officials at all levels of government to ensure that the education of young people is a first priority in communities and the state.	See response to question 7.1
Evaluation	Define sufficient funding for schools and develop models for shared responsibility between state and local governments	Define adequate funding needed to achieve the 2010 goal with models incorporating recognition of student poverty, measures to ensure teacher	See response to question 7.1

Program Number and Title	Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Related FY 03-04 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiative (s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures
		<p>quality, best practices and reliable and valid research and eliminating process or program requirements that do not contribute to the achievement of the 2010 goal</p> <p>Review all existing revenues sources and discuss the related responsibilities of state and local governing bodies.</p>	
Evaluation	Advocate legislation and align budget recommendations to implement systems and structures to ensure that South Carolina schools have the capacity to reach the state's 2010 goal and the goal of <i>No Child Left Behind</i> .	<p>Review accountability reports for professional development programs to determine the most effective use of resources;</p> <p>Explore salary structures, incentives and working environments to promote employment packages that ensure highly qualified administrators and teachers in the pre-kindergarten through grade twelve programs and schools;</p> <p>Identify teaching and learning practices and policies that eliminate the achievement gaps by advancing the achievement of all students to a high level;</p> <p>Recommend changes to the statute to ensure that technical assistance programs incorporate strategies to develop local capacity and responsibility;</p> <p>Propose changes to the state assessment systems to provide more information to teachers and parents and to contain costs.</p>	See response to question 7.1

Program Number and Title	Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Related FY 03-04 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiative (s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures
Implementation and Oversight	Provide the resources and professional development so that data based decision-making is implemented at all levels of the educational system.	Advocate for a unique student identifier and teacher/faculty identifier for students and personnel in the state's public schools and public institutions of postsecondary education; Establish an interactive data warehouse to improve the quality of data, the ease of collection and access to information for decision-making.	See response to question 7.1

3. CUSTOMER FOCUS

1. How do you determine who your customers are and what their key requirements are?

The key customers of the Education Oversight Committee explicitly are listed in the agency's enabling legislation: the Governor, the General Assembly, the State Department of Education, colleges and universities, local school boards, administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the community. Because the overriding objective of improving academic achievement is the focus of the EOC, the agency focuses its products and services on this goal while marketing its products and services to the individual needs and responsibilities of its key customers.

Efforts are made to determine customer requirements in a variety of ways. First, at each meeting of the full committee, the EOC sets aside a portion of the meeting to receive "Remarks from a Key Constituency." These key constituents represent the customers of the EOC. Second, the members of the EOC meet with legislators in their local communities both before and during the legislative session. Often, the EOC conducts workshops throughout South Carolina where educators and community leaders attend. Information, research and evaluations also are provided to the Governor, legislators, and legislative committees as requested. The Chairman of the EOC meets monthly with the Executive Board of the South Carolina School Boards Association. A number of EOC members serve on the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce's Council on Excellence in Education. EOC staff persons are assigned liaison responsibilities to work with major professional associations. Finally, the EOC conducts surveys and focus groups as needed.

2. How do you keep your listening and learning methods current with changing customer/business needs?

The EOC and its staff have worked diligently to provide information on the accountability system and to learn from its customers using the following direct methods of communication:

- Printed publications including *Learning Matters* and the *Accountability Manual*
- Workshops and community meetings throughout the state
- Surveys
- Upgrading of its web site to provide more information

- Presentations at conferences, legislative committees, caucuses, and professional associations.
- Inclusion of school and school district officials in an advisory capacity
- Participation of EOC staff and members on advisory boards, task forces and local school and district committees

In 2003-04 the EOC conducted a public service campaign to encourage and support teachers. For each school in the state, a set of five posters applauding the contributions and achievements of teachers was provided and mailed to the district office. In addition, clocks were made available to schools at a nominal fee for inclusion in classrooms or hallways. The campaign was a direct result of a study conducted by the EOC in the prior fiscal year of pre-K through grade twelve teachers across the state. The purpose of the study was to determine teachers' perceptions of accountability and of the state's education goals. The survey determined that teachers support accountability and have a general consensus that through the combined efforts of the State, educators and the general public, South Carolina can significantly improve its position relative to other states. However, the survey also showed that teachers remain skeptical of achieving the goals set by the EAA. In response to the study, the EOC conducted the public service campaign, communicating with teachers about their vital role in the educational system and in meeting the state's education goals.

In 2003-04 the EOC and/or its staff conducted community meetings in all forty-six counties. Nearly 2,500 educators and community leaders attended these meetings. Roundtable discussions were held and surveys conducted to determine the needs of the local communities in improving involvement in and support of public schools. The EOC learned about programs and strategies that work well to support student learning and heard about challenges schools and communities face to instill a belief of high expectations for all students. The results of these meetings will guide the EOC in its efforts this fiscal year to assist communities in increasing parental and community involvement in public education.

3. How do you use information from customers/stakeholders to keep services or programs relevant and provide for continuous improvement?

Information from customers is used most often to determine if the products and services provided by the EOC assist schools in improving academic success and in supporting the implementation, efficiency, and the effectiveness of academic improvement efforts.

An example is the outcome of the statewide community workshops. After meeting with and surveying community leaders, the EOC determined that business and community leaders desire to be more involved in public education, but often do not know how to get involved. And, increasing "parental" involvement was a common theme in every county. As a direct result of this information, the EOC began formulating a major initiative to promote the importance of parents and adults volunteering to assist students in reading. Another example is the publication of *Family Friendly Content Standards* in Spanish. The EOC determined that one of its customers, Hispanic parents, needed information on the parent standards in Spanish. The EOC hired an interpreter and now provides the information in both languages. This product also assists many school districts who are experiencing a significant increase in enrollment of Hispanic students.

4. How do you measure customer/stakeholder satisfaction?

Customer satisfaction is measured statutorily in terms of changes in the level of student performance. The result measures serve to document these accomplishments. The EOC annually

evaluates extensively the rate of improvement using such indicators as scores on PACT, NAEP, SAT, ACT, Advanced Placement and high school graduation rates.

5. How do you build positive relationships with customers and stakeholders? Indicate any key distinctions between different customer groups.

Members and staff meet regularly, both in formal and informal settings, with the customers and stakeholders. Communication in all forms with our customers is emphasized and encouraged. Because the EOC is charged with encouraging and implementing change, its actions may be unpopular or uncomfortable. Through personal contact, strategies to involve disparate groups, and persistence, the EOC attempts to work through concerns effectively and positively.

4. MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS, AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

1. How do you decide which operations, processes, and systems to measure?

The measures chosen by the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) and its operational Accountability Division focus on the results of schooling as directed by the Educational Accountability Act of 1998 (EAA). The EAA establishes

"Within the Education Oversight Committee, an Accountability Division must be established to report on the monitoring, development, and implementation of the performance based accountability system and reviewing and evaluating all aspects of the Education Accountability Act and the Education Improvement Act" [59-6-100, South Carolina Code of Laws].

The EAA further specifies the focus of the EOC

"The division must examine the public education system to ensure that the system and its components and the EIA programs are functioning for the enhancement of student learning. The division will recommend the repeal or modification of statutes, policies, and rules that deter school improvement. The division must provide annually its findings and recommendations in a report to the Education Oversight Committee no later than February first. The division is to conduct in-depth studies on implementation, efficiency, and the effectiveness of academic improvement efforts and:

- (1) monitor and evaluate the implementation of the state standards and assessment;
- (2) oversee the development, establishment, implementation, and maintenance of the accountability system;
- (3) monitor and evaluate the functioning of the public education system and its components, programs, policies, and practices and report annually its findings and recommendations in a report to the commission no later than February first of each year; and
- (4) perform other studies and reviews as required by law" [Section 59-6-110, 1976 South Carolina Code of Laws].

The EAA also specifies that the EOC is to conduct an on-going public information campaign to apprise the public of the status of the public schools and the importance of high standards for academic performance for South Carolina public school students. The Family Involvement in Their

Children's Education Act of 2000 also directs the EOC to annually assess parent satisfaction with their public schools.

The EOC responded to these broad mandates by determining goals for the success of the accountability system:

By 2010, South Carolina's student achievement will be ranked in the top half of the states nationally. To achieve the 2010 goal, we must become one of the five fastest improving systems in the country.

The EOC identified nine strategic issues which must be addressed with public actions if the 2010 goals are to be achieved. To measure achievement of the 2010 goals and to evaluate progress toward meeting the goals, nine sets of measures were selected for annual reporting.

Specific measures also are specified by legislation and by direction of the EOC. For example, the EOC is currently conducting in-depth studies of student progress in a sample of high schools to provide information useful for policy decisions related to improving the rate of high school completion.

With regard to the internal operations of the EOC, the agency complies with regulations and guidelines followed by state agencies. The Statewide Accounting and Reporting System (STARS) and General Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) specify finance elements and measures which must be reconciled in audits to comply with the requirements of the Dunn and Bradstreet accounting competency rating system. Compliance by each state agency contributes to an overall high rating for the state.

A Baldrige consultant has worked with EOC staff to help in the identification of key issues and measures. The entire staff has met on a semimonthly basis to work through an understanding of the Baldrige process and is in the process of identifying additional key measures.

2. What are your key measures?

Key measures for success of the accountability system include the data related to the nine achievement goals reported annually. These measures include student outcomes from state and national testing programs, other measures related to student success in achieving high school diplomas, measures of school safety, and measures evaluating success in eliminating the gaps in achievement among demographic groups of students while maintaining high achievement standards for all students. Other key measures include variables reported on school and district report cards, all of which were chosen based on their demonstrated relationships to student achievement. For example, the EOC monitors results from the annual evaluations of schools by parents, teachers, and students reported on the school report cards, and is developing a template for school administrators to assist them in the evaluation and use of survey data for school improvement.

Other key measures include financial data related to state expenditures for and support of the public education system. Financial data and measures of academic achievement are used by the EOC in the process of developing annual public education budget recommendations.

For assessment of its internal operations, the EOC evaluates annual audit compliance information, attendance at EOC-sponsored public information activities, and circulation data for publications. For example, based on data from the distribution of earlier editions of the parent versions of the state achievement standards, the EOC increased the printing and distribution of the standards, produced and distributed print-ready electronic versions of the standards distributed to schools and community groups on CDs, and translated the standards into Spanish for distribution to all schools.

3. How do you ensure data quality, reliability, completeness, and availability for decision-making?

Ensuring data quality and availability is an important concern for the EOC. The data elements and the procedures for assessing school outcomes for the accountability system are defined in the annual Accountability Manual published by the EOC. Accountability data from the school and district report cards are analyzed annually and specific data elements are identified for further review. The EOC has established a data quality advisory committee composed of state and district level data specialists to assist in this data review. Based on the advice from this committee, the EOC is conducting a study of the high school graduation rate data and the graduation rate data collection methodology. As part of its efforts to communicate the importance of data quality, the EOC sponsored Dr. Glynn Ligon, a nationally prominent expert on data quality, as the plenary speaker for the annual conference in February 2004 of South Carolina of researchers and data specialists belonging to the state organization affiliated with the American Educational Research Association.

The EOC uses SAS statistical analysis software and Microsoft Excel and Access for analysis of data. In its analyses, the EOC uses either original, raw data such as student test data or finance data obtained from the State Department of Education, or aggregations of data from sources which follow accepted standards for statistical quality such as the federal National Center for Educational Statistics, the State Department of Education, or from test publishers. Internal EOC finance data follow STARS and GAAP guidelines, with monthly budget reconciliations and annual Budget and Control Board audits.

The EOC makes its data available to researchers and other interested parties, subject to FERPA guidelines, through reports published on its web site and in response to requests for data. There is a need to make EOC data and reports more accessible to a wider audience. Currently, work is under way to create an interactive web site to provide accountability data and analyses available to the general public.

4. How do you use data/information analysis to provide effective support for decision-making?

Data compilations and analyses are used by the EOC as the basis for identifying policy issues and for decisions regarding policy recommendations. For example, current analyses of data from the teacher loan program, from programs for providing technical assistance to low achieving schools, and from state and national reading tests are providing the basis for policy recommendations under consideration by the EOC. All decisions regarding the determination of school achievement ratings for the accountability system have been based on data simulations using the different methodologies under consideration.

Data analyses also underpin decision-making regarding financial issues. Analyses of data on student outcomes, teacher: student ratios, instructional support needs, and teacher quality provided the basis for proposals put forth in 2004 by the EOC regarding models for state funding of public schools. With regard to its own budget, analyses of expenditures from prior and current year budgets along

with consideration of EOC goals for the future are critical considerations for the development of each year's budget.

5. How do you select and use comparative data and information?

The EOC seeks and uses data from reputable national and regional organizations such as the National Center for Educational Statistics, the Southern Regional Education Board, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the Education Commission of the States for comparative purposes. Data useful for comparison with other states and the nation are vital to the EOC's annual evaluation of its nine measures of success in achieving its 2010 goals. The EOC also collects data useful for comparisons of educational programs implemented in South Carolina with outcomes from programs in other locations through literature searches from traditional resources and from web-based resources. Within-state comparisons based on data also are conducted by the EOC, such as in its annual report on reducing the achievement gaps in which schools showing success are identified so educators may study them for models of success.

6. How do you manage organizational knowledge to accomplish the collection and transfer and maintenance of accumulated employee knowledge, and identification and sharing of best practices?

The EOC maintains an Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual and a Fiscal Procedures Manual and updates these resources as needed. A publications library containing all EOC reports is maintained, and all reports and minutes from EOC committee meetings are published on the EOC web site. Established in 1998, the EOC is a relatively young state agency which has become more aware of the need to maintain historical archives now that it has completed its initial growth. Currently, EOC staff is consulting with the South Carolina Department of Archives and History for advice on what needs to be archived and are developing procedures and schedules for complying with state guidelines.

As a very small agency, all staff members are in frequent daily contact and consult with one another about on-going activities and projects. Regularly scheduled monthly staff meetings have been established to ensure that all staff members are apprised of policies and that all members of the team share and maintain the same focus and vision for the agency.

5. HUMAN RESOURCES FOCUS

1. How do you and your managers/supervisors encourage and motivate employees (formally and/or informally) to develop and utilize their full potential?

The EOC is committed to excellent employee-employer relations. This includes creating an environment where employees understand how their positions support the agency mission and feel valued for their efforts. EOC staff members are encouraged to participate in professional organizations, attend conferences, and work with consultants and colleagues to improve their practice.

As staff members must meet professional certification requirements, the EOC adjusts work schedules accordingly. The EOC encourages and motivates employees through innovation and flexibility. Flexible and compressed workweek schedules have allowed employees to adjust their work schedules to accommodate their employment and personal lives.

The Executive Director involves all staff persons in EOC work, particularly in major projects so that the work is "owned" by the entire staff. Staff members are required to have others review work

before its release. This is accomplished through collegial interaction and through discussion based staff meetings. All staff persons have been involved in the EOC's public awareness effort, attending meetings across the state as their schedules and assignments permitted. Administrative personnel attend meetings in accordance with their projects.

2. How do you identify and address key developmental and training needs, including job skills training, performance excellence training, diversity training, management/leadership development, new employee orientation and safety training?

Through reference and utilization of professional standards for research, curriculum construction and other aspects of EOC work, staff members are compelled to learn and meet the highest standards.

Staff members have participated in workshops on the Baldrige criteria and zero-based budgeting and continue to study applications in state government. Staff members have participated in a writing workshop and have been trained in the utilization of the AccessXP database.

3 How does your employee performance management system, including feedback to and from employees, support high performance?

The EOC implemented a universal review date in August 2003. The required evaluation is to be completed for all employees at the same time. Each staff person is asked to set a professional development goal for the year and, working through available programs, services or professional organizations pursue that goal. The Executive Director used the EPMS system and frequent informal meetings as an opportunity to discuss progress, interests and ways in which the EOC can benefit its personnel.

4. What formal and/or informal assessment methods and measures do you use to determine employee well being, satisfaction, and motivation?

The Executive Director employs a number of formal and informal mechanisms to receive feedback and determine staff well-being and satisfaction. She meets with individual staff persons monthly (or more frequently, if necessary) to identify ways in which the organization can be more effective and ways in which the EOC can assist the individual to be more effective. The Executive Director also examines attendance records to determine if employees are having difficulties and/or are dissatisfied. The Executive Director maintains an open door policy and if problems surface, these are explored privately.

5. How do you maintain a safe, secure, and healthy work environment? (Include you workplace preparedness for emergencies and disasters.)

The EOC offices are in the Solomon Blatt Building on the State House grounds. Each staff person has been given a list of procedures to be followed in case of an emergency. EOC staff members are asked to identify potential hazards.

The House of Representatives and the Budget and Control Board maintain the facilities. The Records Officer is working with the South Carolina Department of Archives and History to develop a storage schedule for a large volume of materials.

Employees have access to the state's health screening services and other programs offered by the Budget and Control Board.

6. What activities are employees involved with that make a positive contribution to the community?

EOC staff members are very active in their communities. A number of EOC Staff members serve on their church councils, School Improvement Councils, and volunteer at their children's schools. Several employees donate blood on a regular basis.

6. PROCESS MANAGEMENT

1. What are your key processes that produce, create or add value for your customers and your organization, and how do they contribute to success?

The EOC maintains a data base of nearly 11,000 stakeholders. The data base has been built over a series of six years from sources such as members of civic organizations and participants in community meetings. The data base is divided into three categories: grass roots, decision makers and decision influencers. When the EOC develops a product, decisions are made about the target audience, their access and use and the best ways to ensure the product is used effectively. All EOC materials are available on the website. On-line reports and publications have proved to be an effective and popular means of providing information.

Subcommittee meetings are held in Columbia or by teleconference. The agency conforms to all the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. Email and facsimile notices of meetings are provided to a wide audience at their request.

2. How do you incorporate organizational knowledge, new technology, changing customer and mission-related requirements, cost controls, and other efficiency and effectiveness factors into process design delivery?

The EOC worked with its key customers to determine the most effective means of delivering its products (i.e., research and recommendations) to the various publics. It was determined that three levels of publications are required: highly technical documentation, research briefs for general audiences, and graphic representations of the information. For each study these three levels of product are available and distributed in print or electronic format. In 2003-2004 the EOC developed a vision for an interactive web site and is developing the programs and materials for that site.

With respect to staff technologies the EOC has concluded a two-year strategy of acquiring new hardware. Staff participated in training on ACCESS and, for particular staff persons, ARCVIEW and web programs.

The EOC examines expenditures patterns, particularly printing, to determine if the work is accomplished more economically in-house or by contractors. The costs of staff time are included in the comparisons.

Working with the Baldrige processes is enabling the agency to determine ways in which its services can be more effective. This is an ongoing process and a challenge for all staff and members.

3. How does your day-to-day operation of these processes ensure meeting key performance requirements?

Concepts for new projects are processed and reviewed to ensure comprehensive research, quality of printed materials, on-time delivery and availability. The EOC staff members follow the management plan to ensure that work is accomplished in accordance with the time lines. Staff members constantly seek input from key suppliers, contractors and stakeholders in order to improve agency processes. Ultimately, these plans drive the day-to-day operation of the EOC.

4. What are your key support processes and how do you improve and update these processes to achieve better performance?

The EOC focused on process improvement to better deliver summary publications for reports to broaden the utilization of research findings. For example, demographical maps, charts and graphs were used in reports to illustrate the performance levels of students in order to improve the understanding of district and school success. The EOC provides a variety of online resources and publications to help key stakeholders get involved in the success of South Carolina's students and schools. An interactive website using demographical maps is under development to better utilize research findings.

5. How do you manage and support your key supplier/contractor/partner interactions and processes to improve performance?

The EOC maintains close relationships with key suppliers, contractors and stakeholders and solidifies their involvement in improving processes. Periodically, the EOC seeks updated contact information through a quarterly newsletter and continuously through an on-line comments section of the website. As a part of the efforts to maintain contact with partners and stakeholders, the EOC conducted community meetings in each South Carolina county.

7. RESULTS

1. What are your performance levels and trends for key measures of customer satisfaction?

The EOC is a legislative agency and its employees are at-will employees. Ultimately a key measure of customer satisfaction is the continuation of funding for the agency, the assignment of new tasks and the inclusion of agency staff and EOC members in task forces, planning groups and advisory bodies on the improvement of South Carolina's public education system.

The EOC also works with other key customers to determine the utility of technical analyses and publications in their work. Publication requests and requests for presentations and data analyses are measures of customer satisfaction.

The EOC fulfilled each of the requirements of the EAA in accordance with the legislative timeline. The funding model was presented in December 2003 and introduced as legislation in the subsequent session. Budget recommendations were aligned with the 2010 goal and related actions. The achievement gap report was published in June 2003 with information related to the successful schools distributed widely. With legislative support, an alternative technical assistance program and a testing task force were approved for implementation in 2004. Funding was provided for the unique student identifier although funding for the data warehouse remains in question.

The EOC worked with legislative committees and with individual legislators to ensure that public education funding was increased and those initiatives integral to the accountability system were funded fully.

2. What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of mission accomplishment and organizational effectiveness?

Mission accomplishment is measured through improvement in student and school performance on state standards-based tests and the school and district rating system. The EOC adopted nine measures to determine the accomplishment of the 2010 goal. Status reports are published each December (*Learning Matters: Where Are We Now*) and available on the agency website.

3. What are your performance levels for the key measures of financial performance?

State law requires an annual review of agencies' accounting procedures by the Division of the State Auditor. The EOC's accounting operations and stewardship of state resources for Fiscal Years 2000-2001 were reviewed during Fiscal Year 2001-2002. These reviews resulted in no findings of material weaknesses or violations in the EOC's accounting procedures.

The EOC received three appropriations under the EIA. Following mid-year reductions, these appropriations included \$1,075,623 for personal services and other operating costs, \$226,592 for the public awareness campaign and \$45,318 for the Family Involvement projects. The EOC also has a separate public awareness fund for donations, ending the year with a balance of \$73,564.92 and other operating funds account with a balance of \$4,287.05.

4. What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of Human Resource Results (Includes: performance measurement, employee satisfaction, well-being, learning and development, employee diversity and retention)?

The Executive Director reviews leave patterns, evaluations and conducts small group discussions to measure satisfaction, involvement and development. In 2004 a Baldrige employee survey was administered.

5. What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of regulators/legal compliance and community support?

The EOC operations have been audited by the South Carolina State Auditor's Office including reviews of fiscal procedures, benefits, closing packages, and contractual obligations. No discrepancies have been identified in any of the audits.